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Treasure Trove

of Love Songs

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Because, You See, I Love You

"I'M sorry that I spelt the word,
I hate to go above you,
Because"—the brown eyes lower fell—
"Because, you see, I love you!"

John Greenleaf Whittier

I THINK true love is never blind,
But rather brings an added light;
An inner vision quick to find
The beauties hid from common sight.

No soul can ever clearly see
Another's highest, noblest part;
Save through the sweet philosophy
And loving wisdom of the heart.

Phœbe Cary

THOU askest, Love, how dear thou art to me!
A lifetime of sweet answers that includes.
Thou'rt that, which my much blest life holds blessedest,
Of my soul's self the dearer counterpart;
Dearest of all dear things to me art thou.
Of love's divinest height the supreme crest,
Yet I can never say how dear thou art.

Mary Ashley Townsend

HOW do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being, and Ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.
I love thee freely as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely as they turn from Praise;
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs and with my childhood's faith;
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost Saints,—I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life! and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

SHE stood breast-high amid the corn,
Clasped by the golden light of morn,
Like the sweetheart of the sun,
Who many a glowing kiss had won.

On her cheek an Autumn flush
Deeply ripened:—such a blush
In the midst of brown was born,
Like red poppies grown with corn.

Round her eyes her tresses fell,
Which were blackest none could tell,
But long lashes veiled a light
That had else been all too bright.

And her hat, with shady brim,
Made her tressy forehead dim;
Thus she stood amid the stooks,
Praising God with sweetest looks.

Sure, I said, Heav'n did not mean,
Where I reap thou shouldst but glean:
Lay thy sheaf adown and come,
Share my harvest and my home.

Tom Hood

I LOVE thee—I love thee!
'Tis all that I can say;
It is my vision in the night,
My dreaming in the day;
The very echo of my heart,
The blessing when I pray.
I love thee—I love thee!
Is all that I can say.

I love thee—I love thee!
Is ever on my tongue.
In all my proudest poesy
That chorus still is sung;
It is the verdict of my eyes
Amidst the gay and young:
I love thee—I love thee!
A thousand maids among.

I love thee—I love thee!
Thy bright and hazel glance,
The mellow lute upon those lips,
Whose tender tones entrance.
But most dear heart of hearts, thy proofs,
That still these words enhance!
I love thee—I love thee!
Whatever be my chance.

Tom Hood

SHE gathered at her slender waist
The beauteous robe she wore;
Its folds a golden belt embraced;
One rose-hued gem it bore.

The girdle shrank; its lessening round
Still kept the shining gem,
But now her flowing locks it bound,
A lustrous diadem.

And narrower still the circlet grew.
Behold! a glittering band,
Its roseate diamond set anew,
Her neck's white column spanned.

Suns rise and set; the straining clasp
The shortened links resist,
Yet flashes in a bracelet's grasp
The diamond on her wrist.

At length, the round of changes past
The thieving years could bring,
The jewel, glittering to the last,
Still sparkles in a ring.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

"I LOVE you, dear!" and saying this,
My heart responds, "'Tis true! 'tis true!"
And thrills with more than earthly bliss
While still I say, "I love but you!"

'Why should I love you, dear?" you ask,
As tho' true love could reason why;
If love could think, 'twould be a task
For me to love, and love would die.

I love you just because I do,
The key I do not care to find,
For fear the strands would break in two
That me a willing captive bind.

The fact is all I want to know,
I will not grieve while that is given;
To lose my love would be my woe;
To keep it as it is, is heaven.

George W. Crofts

SHE keeps the gift of years before—
A withered violet is her bliss;
She knows not what his greatness is;
For that, for all, she loves him more.

For him she plays, to him she sings
Of early faith and plighted vows;
She knows but matters of the house;
And he—he knows a thousand things.

Her faith is fixed and cannot move;
She darkly feels him great and wise;
She dwells on him with faithful eyes;
"I cannot understand—I love."

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

HE rides away at early light,
Amid the tingling frost,
And in the mist that sweeps her sight
His form is quickly lost.

He crosses now the silent stream,
Now skirts the forest drear,
Whose thickets cast a silver gleam
From leafage thin and sear.

Long falls the shadow at his back
(The morning springs before);
His thoughts fly down the shadow'd track
And haunt his cottage door.

Miles gone, upon the hilltop bare
He draws a sudden rein;
His name, her voice, rings on the air,
Then all is still again!

She sits at home, she speaks no word,
But deeply calls her heart;
And this it is that he has heard,
Though they are miles apart.

Edith M. Thomas

BELIEVE me, if all those endearing young charms,
Which I gaze on so fondly to-day,
Were to change by to-morrow, and fleet in my arms,
Like fairy gifts fading away,
Thou wouldst still be adored, as this moment thou art,
Let thy loveliness fade as it will,
And around the dear ruin each wish of my heart
Would entwine itself verdantly still.

It is not while beauty and youth are thine own,
And thy cheeks unprofaned by a tear,
That the fervor and faith of a soul can be known,
To which time will but make thee more dear.
No, the heart that has truly loved never forgets,
But as truly loves on to the close,
As the sunflower turns on her god, when he sets,
The same look which she turned when he rose.

Thomas Moore

NOT as all other women may,
Love I my love ; he is so great,
So beautiful, I dare essay
No nearness, but in silence lay
My heart upon his path and wait.

Poor heart, its beatings are so low
He does not heed them passing by,
Save as one heeds, where violets grow,
A fragrance, caring not to know
Where the veiled purple buds may lie.

I sometimes think that it is dead—
It lies so still. I bend and lean,
Like mother over cradle head,
Wondering if still faint breaths are shed,
Like sighs the parted lips between.

And then with vivid pulse and thrill,
It quickens into sudden bliss,
At sound of step or voice, nor will
Be hushed, although, regardless still,
He knows not, cares not, it is his.

I would not lift it if I could :
The little flame, tho' faint and dim
As glow-worm spark in lonely wood,
Shining where no man calls it good,
May one day light the path for him,

May guide his way, or soon or late,
Through blinding mist or wintry rain,
And so content I watch and wait—
Let others share his happier fate,
I only ask to share his pain,

And if some day, when passing by,
My dear love should his steps arrest,
Should mark the poor heart waiting nigh,
Should know it his, should lift it, why—
Patience is good, but joy is best.

Susan Coolidge

I LOVED thee for that dear, deep lovingness
Resting within thy tender, brooding eyes;
I loved thee for thy wealth of womanhood,
Thy quiet questionings, thy sweet replies,
Thy patient brows that knew no bitter mood.

George Francis Armstrong

IN Love, if Love be Love, if Love be ours,
Faith and unfaith can ne'er be equal powers:
Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all.

It is the little rift within the lute
That by and by will make the music mute,
And, ever widening, slowly silence all:

The little rift within the lover's lute,
Or little pitted speck in garner'd fruit,
That, rotting inward, slowly moulders all.

It is not worth the keeping: let it go!
But shall it? Answer, darling; answer, No;
And trust me not at all or all in all.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

LONG years within its sepulcher
Of faintly scented cedar,
Has lain this letter, dear to her
Who was its constant reader;
The postmark on the envelope
Sufficed the date to give her,
And told the birth of patient hope
That managed to outlive her.

How often to this treasure-box,
Tears in her eyes' soft fringes,
She came with key and turned the locks
And on its brazen hinges
Swung back the quaintly figured lid,
And raised a sandal cover,
Disclosing, under trinkets hid,
This message from her lover.

Then lifting it as 'twere a child,
Her hand awhile caressed it
Ere to the lips that sadly smiled
Time and again she pressed it;
Then drew the small inclosure out
And smoothed the wrinkled paper,
Lest any line should leave a doubt
Or any word escape her.

Still held the olden charm its place
Amid the tender phrases.
Time seemed unwilling to efface
The love-pervaded praises;
And though a thousand lovers might
Have matched them all for passion,
A poet were inspired to write
In their unstudied fashion.

From "Darling" slowly, word by word,
She reads the tear-stained treasure;
The mists by which her eyes were blurred
Grew out of pain and pleasure;
But when she reached that cherished name,
And saw the last leave-taking,
The mist a storm of grief became—
Her very heart was breaking!

I put it back,—this old-time note
Which seems like sorrow's leaven,
For she who read and he who wrote,
Please God, are now in heaven.
If lovers of to-day could win
Such love as won this letter,
The world about us would begin
To gladden and grow better.

Frank Dempster Sherman

THE violet loves a sunny bank,
The cowslip loves the lea,
The scarlet creeper loves the elm;
But I love—thee.

The sunshine kisses mount and vale,
The stars, they kiss the sea,
The west winds kiss the clover bloom,
But I kiss—thee.

The oriole weds his mottled mate,
The lily's bride o' the bee;
Heaven's marriage ring is round the earth—
Shall I wed thee?

Bayard Taylor

WHAT shall I do for my love,
Who is so tender
And dear and true,
Loving and true and tender,
My strength and my defender—
What shall I do?

I will cleave unto my love,
Who am too lowly
For him to take.
With a self-surrender holy
I will cleave unto him solely,
I will give my being wholly
For his dear sake.

Lewis Morris

TWO things love can do,
Only two;
Can distrust or can believe;
It can die or it can live.
There is no syncope
Possible to love or me.
Go your ways!

Two things you can do,
Only two;
Be the thing you used to be,
Or be nothing more to me,
I can but joy or grieve,
Can no more die than live.
Go your ways!

So far I wrote, my darling, drearily,
But now my sad pen falls down wearily
From out my trembling hand.

I did not, do not, cannot mean it, Dear!
Come life or death, joy, grief, or hope or fear,
I bless you where I stand!

I bless you where I stand excusing you,
No speech nor language for accusing you
My laggard lips can learn.

To you—be what you are, or can, to me-
To you or blessedly or fatefully
My heart must turn !

Elizabeth Stuart Phelps

MAXWELTON braes are bonnie
Where early fa's the dew,
And it's there that Annie Laurie
Gie'd me her promise true,—
Gie'd me her promise true,
Which ne'er forgot will be;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doune and dee.

Her brow is like the snaw-drift;
Her throat is like the swan;
Her face it is the fairest
That e'er the sun shone on,—
That e'er the sun shone on,—
And dark blue is her ee;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doune and dee.

Like dew on the gowan lying
Is the fa' o' her fairy feet;
And like winds in summer sighing
Her voice is low and sweet—
Her voice is low and sweet—
And she's a' the world to me;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doune and dee.

"DARLING," he said, "I never meant
To hurt you;" and his eyes were wet.
"I would not hurt you for the world;
Am I to blame if I forget?"

"Forgive my selfish tears!" she cried,
"Forgive! I knew that it was not
Because you meant to hurt me, sweet,—
I knew it was that you forgot!"

But all the same, deep in her heart
Rankled this thought, and rankles yet,—
"When love is at its best, one loves
So much that he can not forget."

Helen Hunt Jackson

WHOM we first love, you know, we seldom wed.
Time rules us all. And life, indeed, is not
The thing we planned it out ere hope was dead;
And then, we women cannot choose our lot.

Much must be borne which it is hard to bear;
Much given away which it were sweet to keep.
God help us all! who need, indeed, His care.
And yet, I know, the Shepherd loves His sheep.

My little boy begins to babble now
Upon my knee his earliest infant prayer.
He has his father's eager eyes, I know,
And they say, too, his mother's sunny hair.

But when he sleeps and smiles upon my knee,
And I can feel his light breath come and go,
I think of one (Heaven help and pity me!)
Who loved me, and whom I loved, long ago.

Who might have been—Ah, what I dare not think!
We all are changed; God judges for us best.
God help us do our duty and not shrink,
And trust in Heaven humbly for the rest.

But blame us women not if some appear
Too cold at times, and some too gay and light.
Some griefs gnaw deep, some woes are hard to bear—
Who knows the past, and who can judge us right?

Ah, we are judged by what we might have been,
And not by what we are, too apt to fall!
My little child—he sleeps and smiles between
Those thoughts and me. In Heaven we shall know all.

Owen Meredith

WHAT is the meaning of the song
That rings so clear and loud,
Thou nightingale amid the copse,
Thou lark above the cloud?

What says thy song, thou joyous thrush,
Up in the walnut tree?
"I love my Love because I know
My Love loves me."

What is the meaning of thy thought,
O Maiden fair and young?
There is such pleasure in thine eyes,
Such music on thy tongue;

There is such glory on thy face—
What can the meaning be?
"I love my Love because I know
My Love loves me."

O, happy words! At Beauty's feet
We sing them ere our prime;
And when the early summers pass
And care comes on with time,

Still be it ours, in care's despite,
To join the chorus free,
"I love my Love because I know
My Love loves me."

O MY heart's heart and you who are to me
More than myself myself, God be with you,
Keep you in strong obedience, leal and true
To him whose noble service setteth free,
Give you all good we see or can foresee,
Make your joys many and your sorrows few,
Bless you in what you bear and what you do,
Yea, perfect you as He would have you be.
So much for you; but what for me, dear friend?
To love you without stint and all I can
To-day, to-morrow, world without an end:
To love you much, and yet to love you more,
As Jordan at its flood sweeps either shore;
Since woman is the helpmeet made for man.

Christina G. Rossetti

OH, Love is weak
Which counts the answers and the gains,
Weighs all the losses and the pains,
And eagerly each fond word drains,
A joy to seek.

When Love is strong,
It never tarries to take heed,
Or know if its return exceed
Its gift ; in its sweet haste no greed,
No strifes belong.

It hardly asks
If it be loved at all ; to take
So barren seems, when it can make
Such bliss for the beloved sake,
Oh, bitter tasks !

Its ecstasy
Could find hard death so beauteous,
It sees through tears how Christ loved us.
And speaks, in saying, "I love thus,"
No blasphemy.

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DATE OF PUB. VOLS. PRICE

TO BE CHARGED TO GENERAL FUND

30 Dec. 48 = 7. Lockley, exchange

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So much we miss
If Love is weak ; so much we gain
If Love is strong : God thinks no pain
Too sharp or lasting to ordain
To teach us this.

Helen Hunt Jackson

SHE is not fair to outward view
As many maidens be;
Her loveliness I never knew
Until she smiled on me:
O then I saw her eye was bright,
A well of love, a spring of light!

But now her looks are coy and cold,
To mine they ne'er reply;
And yet I cease not to behold
The love-light in her eye:
Her very frowns are fairer far
Than smiles of other maidens are.

Hartley Coleridge

O H, my luve's like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June:
Oh, my luve's like the melodie
That's sweetly played in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in luve am I;
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt in the sun,
I will luve thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only luve!
And fare thee weel awhile!
And I will come again, my luve,
Though it were ten thousand mile.

Robert Burns

I'D give, Girl, (were I but a king),
Throne, scepter, empire,—everything:
My people, suppliant on the knee;
My ships that crowd the subject sea;
My crown, my baths of porphyry,
For *one* sweet look from thee!

Were I a god, I'd give—the air,
Earth, and the sea; the angels fair;
The skies; the golden worlds around;
The demons whom my laws have bound;
Chaos and its dark progeny;
All space and all eternity,
For *one* love-kiss from thee!

Victor Hugo

The Morning of Love

O LADY, there be many things
That seem right fair, below, above;
But sure not one among them all
Is half so sweet as love.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

MY true-love hath my heart and I have his,
By just exchange one to the other given;
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss:
There never was a better bargain driven.
My true-love hath my heart and I have his.

His heart in me keeps him and me in one,
My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides;
He loves my heart, for once it was his own,
I cherish his because in me it bides.
My true-love hath my heart and I have his.

Sir Philip Sidney

THE scent of a blossom from Eden !
The flower was not given to me,
But it freshened my spirit forever,
As it passed, on its way to thee !

In my soul is a lingering music :
The song was not meant for me,
But I listen and listen, and wonder
To whom it can lovelier be.

The sounds and the scents that float by us—
They cannot tell whither they go ;
Yet however it fails of its errand,
Love makes the world sweeter, I know.

I know that love never is wasted,
Nor truth, nor the breath of a prayer ;
And the thought that goes forth as a blessing
Must live, as a joy in the air.

Lucy Larcom

BETTER to have the love of one
Than smiles like morning dew ;
Better to have a living seed
Than flowers of every hue.

Better to feel a love within
Than be lovely to the sight ;
Better a homely tenderness
Than beauty's wild delight.

Better to love than be beloved,
Though lonely all the day ;
Better the fountain in the heart
Than the fountain by the way.

Better the thanks of one dear heart
Than a nation's voice of praise ;
Better the twilight ere the dawn
Than yesterday's mid-blaze.

Leigh Hunt

IT is not because your heart is mine—mine only,
Mine alone,
It is not because you choose me weak and lonely
For your own ;
Not because the earth is fairer, and the skies,
Spread above you,
Are more radiant for the shining of your eyes—
That I love you !

Nay, not even because your hand holds heart and life
At your will,
Soothing, hushing all its discord, making strife
Calm and still ;
Teaching Trust to fold her wings, nor ever roam
From her nest;
Teaching Love that her securest, safest home
Must be rest.

But because this human Love, though true and
Yours and mine— [sweet—
Has been sent by Love more tender, more complete,
More divine,
That it leads our hearts to rest at last in Heaven,
Far above you ;
Do I take you as a gift that God has given—
And I love you !

Adelaide Anne Procter

LOVE much. Earth has enough of bitter in it;
Cast sweets into its cup whene'er you can.
No heart so hard but love at last may win it.
Love is the grand primeval cause of man;
All hate is foreign to the first great plan.

Lovemuch. Men's souls contract with cold suspicion;
Shine on them with warm love, and they expand.
'Tis love, not creeds, that from a low condition
Leads mankind up to heights supreme and grand.
Oh, that the world would see and understand!

Love much. There is no waste in freely giving;
More blessed it is, even, than to receive.
He who loves much, alone finds life worth living;
Love on through doubt and darkness, and believe
There is no thing which love may not achieve.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

"IF one find a four-leaf clover"
(She said, sitting on the grass),
"He can wish whate'er he likes to,—
And that wish shall come to pass."

"Do you say so?" Then down kneeling
'Mong the sorrel and cropt grass,
Looked I for a four-leaf clover
And my wish to come to pass.

Long I searched among the sorrel,
Close beside me she searched too;
Now and then some commonplaces
Broke the silence,—but it grew.

For my heart was full of yearning,
And my mouth of eager words,
But I dared not give them utterance,—
So I hearkened to the birds;

And kept looking, looking, looking,
While beside me she looked too—
Two bent figures in the twilight,
Green hills paling into blue.

"Ha, I have one!" "Yes, and wished for?"
"You, and shall it be?" I cried.
Eyes cast down she asked demurely,
"Hath the clover not replied?"

George Houghton

WHEN Spring comes laughing
By vale and hill,
By wind-flower walking
And daffodil,—
Sing stars of morning,
Sing morning skies,
Sing blue of speedwell
And my Love's eyes!

When comes the Summer,
Full leaved and strong,
And gay birds gossip
The orchard long,—
Sing hid, sweet honey
That no bee sips;
Sing red, red roses
And my Love's lips!

When Autumn scatters
The leaves again,
And piled sheaves bury
The broad-wheeled wain,—
Sing flutes of harvest
When men rejoice;
Sing round of reapers
And my Love's voice!

But when comes Winter
With hail and storm,
And red fire roaring
And ingle warm,
Sing first sad going
Of friends that part;
Then sing glad meeting
And my Love's heart!

Austin Dobson

FIRST time he kissed me, he but only kissed ,
The fingers of this hand wherewith I write
And ever since it grew more clean and white,—
Slow to world-greetings,—quick with its
"Oh, list!"
When the angels speak. A ring of amethyst
I could not wear here plainer to my sight
Than that first kiss. The second passed in height
The first, and sought the forehead, and half missed
Half falling on the hair. O beyond meed!
That was the chrism of love, with love's own crown,
With sanctifying sweetness, did precede.
The third upon my lips was folded down
In perfect, purple state! since when, indeed
I have been proud and said, "My Love, my own."

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

AND *this* is Love ! until this hour
I never lived ; but like a flower
Close prest i' the bud, with sleeping senses,
I drank the dark dim influences
Of sunlight, moonlight, shade, and dew.
At last I open, thrilling thro'
With Love's strange scent, which seemeth part
Of the warm life within my heart,
Part of the air I breathe—O bliss !
Was ever night so sweet as this?
It is enough to breathe, to be,
As if one were a flower, a tree;
A leaf o' the bough, just stirring light
With the warm breathing of the night !

Robert Buchanan

YES, Love indeed is light from Heaven,
A spark of that immortal fire
With angels shared, by Allah given,
To lift from earth our low desire.
Devotion wafts the soul above,
But Heaven itself descends in Love.
A feeling from the Godhead caught,
To wean from self each sordid thought!
A ray of Him who formed the whole;
A glory circling round the soul!

George Gordon, Lord Byron

WHEN the tide comes in
In hearts, at once the hearts begin
Together to be glad.
What the tide has brought
They do not care, they have not sought.
All joy they ever had
The new joy multiplies;
All pain by which it may be bought
Seems paltry sacrifice.

Helen Hunt Jackson

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LOVE is come with a song and a smile,
Welcome Love with a smile and a song.
Love can stay but a little while,
Why cannot he stay? They call him away;
Ye do him wrong, ye do him wrong;
Love will stay for a whole life long.

Alfred Tennyson

WITH my love this knowledge too was given,
Which each calm day doth strengthen more and more,
That they who love are but one step from Heaven.

James Russell Lowell

DEAR Lord, let me recount to Thee
Some of the great things Thou hast done
For me, even me,
Thy little one.

It was not that I cared for Thee—
But thou didst set Thy heart upon
Me, even me,
Thy little one.

And therefore was it sweet to Thee
To leave Thy majesty and throne,
And grow like me,
A little one.

* * * * * *

Thou lovedst me upon the Tree—
Still me, hid by the ponderous stone—
Me always—me,
Thy little one.

And love of me arose with Thee
When death and hell lay overthrown:
Thou lovedst me,
Thy little one.

And love of me went up with Thee
To sit upon Thy Father's throne:
  Thou lovest me,
  Thy little one.

Lord, as Thou me, so would I Thee
Love in pure love's communion,
  For thou lov'st me,
  Thy little one.

Christina Georgina Rossetti

DEAR friend, I pray thee, if thou wouldst be proving
Thy strong regard for me,
Make me no vows. Lip-service is not loving;
Let thy faith speak for thee.

Swear not to me that nothing can divide us,
So little such oaths mean,
But when distrust and envy creep beside us,
Let them not come between.

Say not to me the depths of thy devotion
Are deeper than the sea;
But watch, lest doubt or some unkind emotion
Embitter them for me.

Vow not to love me ever and forever,
Words are such idle things,
But when we differ in opinions, never
Hurt me by little stings.

I'm sick of words, they are so lightly spoken,
And spoken are but air.
I'd rather feel thy trust in me unbroken
Than list to thy words so fair.

If all the little proofs of trust are heeded,
If thou art always kind,
No sacrifice, no promise will be needed
To satisfy my mind.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

THEN, in that time and place, I spoke to he
Requiring, tho' I knew it was mine own,
Yet for the pleasure that I took to hear,
Requiring at her hand the greatest gift,
A woman's heart, the heart of her I loved ;
And in that time and place she answered me

And in the compass of three little words,
More musical than ever came in one,
The silver fragments of a broken voice,
Made me most happy, faltering "I am thine."

Alfred Tennyson

IT was Maytime,
And I was walking with the man I loved,—
I loved him, but I thought I was not loved;
And both were silent, letting the wild brook
Speak for us, till he stoop'd and gathered one
From out a bed of thick forget-me-nots,
Look'd hard and sweet at me and gave it me.
I took it, tho' I did not know I took it,
And put it in my bosom, and all at once
I felt his arm about me, and his lips.

Alfred Tennyson

I LOVE you. Words are small;
'Tis life speaks plain: In twenty years
Perhaps you may know all.

Dina Maria Mulock Craik

LIFE may to you bring every good
Which from a father's hand can fall:
But if true lips have said to me,
"I love you," I have known it all!

Phœbe Cary

LEARN that to love is the one way to know
Or God or man: it is not love received
That maketh man to know the inner life
Of them that love him; his own love bestowed
Shall do it.

Jean Ingelow

THERE will I ask of Christ the Lord
Thus much for him and me,—
Only to live as once on earth
With Love,—only to be,
As then awhile, forever now
Together, I and he.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti

TYING her bonnet under her chin
She tied her raven ringlets in ;
But not alone in the silken snare
Did she catch her lovely floating hair,
For, tying her bonnet under her chin,
She tied a young man's heart within.

They were strolling together up the hill,
Where the wind comes blowing merry and chill;
And it blew the curls a frolicsome race
All over the happy peach-colored face,
Till, scolding and laughing, she tied them in
Under her beautiful dimpled chin.

And it blew a color, bright as the bloom
Of the pinkest fuchsia's tossing plume,
All over the cheeks of the prettiest girl,
That ever imprisoned a romping curl,
Or, tying her bonnet under her chin,
Tied a young man's heart within.

Steeper and steeper grew the hill ;
Madder, merrier, chillier, still
The western wind blew down and played
The wildest tricks with the little maid,

As, tying her bonnet under her chin,
She tied a young man's heart within.

O western wind, do you think it was fair
To play such tricks with the floating hair?
To gladly, gleefully do your best
To blow her against the young man's breast,
Where he as gladly folded her in,
And kissed her mouth and dimpled chin?

Ah! Ellery Vane, you little thought
An hour ago, when you besought
This country lass to walk with you,
After the sun had dried the dew,
What perilous danger you'd be in
As she tied her bonnet under her chin.

Nora Perry

THEIR little language the children
Have, on the knee as they sit;
And only those who love them
Can find the key to it.

The words thereof and the grammar
Perplex the logician's art;
But the heart goes straight with the meaning,
And the meaning is clear to the heart.

So thou, my Love, hast a language
That in little says all to me;—
But the world cannot guess the sweetness
Which is hidden with love and thee.

Francis Turner Palgrave

Home

FOR there are two heavens, sweet,
Both made of love,—one, inconceivable
Ev'n by the other, so divine it is ;
The other, far on this side of the stars,
By men called home.

Leigh Hunt

STAY, stay at home, my heart, and rest;
Home-keeping hearts are happiest.
For those that wander they know not where,
Are full of trouble, and full of care;
To stay at home is best.

Weary and homesick and distressed,
They wander east, they wander west,
And are baffled and beaten and blown about
By the winds of the wilderness of doubt;
To stay at home is best.

Then stay at home, my heart, and rest;
The bird is safest in its nest;
O'er all that flutter their wings and fly
A hawk is hovering in the sky;
To stay at home is best.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

WHERE we love is home,
Home that our feet may leave, but not our hearts,
Though o'er us shines the jasper lighted dome :—
The chain may lengthen, but it never parts !

Oliver Wendell Holmes

AS thro' the land at eve we went
And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,
We fell out, my wife and I,
Oh, we fell out, I know not why,
And kiss'd again with tears.

For when we came where lies the child
We lost in other years,
There above the little grave,
Oh, there above the little grave,
We kiss'd again with tears.

Alfred Tennyson

A GOOD wife rose from her bed one morn,
And thought, with a nervous dread,
Of the piles of clothes to be washed, and more
Than a dozen mouths to be fed.
There's the meals to get for the men in the field;
And the children to fix away
To school; and the milk to be skimmed and churned:
And all to be done this day.

It had rained in the night, and all the wood
Was wet as it could be;
There were puddings and pies to bake, besides
A loaf of cake for tea.
And the day was hot, and her aching brow
Throbbed wearily as she said:
"If maidens but knew what good wives know,
They would be in no haste to wed!"

* * * * *

"Jennie, what do you think I told Ben Brown?"
Called the farmer from the well;
And a flush crept up to his bronzed brow,
And his eyes half-bashfully fell.
"It was this," he said, and, coming near,
He smiled, and, stooping down,

Kissed her cheek—"'Twas this: That you were
the best
And the dearest wife in town!"

The farmer went back to the field, and the wife,
In a smiling and absent way,
Sang snatches of tender little songs
She'd not sung for many a day.
And the pain in her head was gone, and the clothes
Were white as the foam of the sea;
Her bread was light, and her butter was sweet,
And as golden as it could be.

"Just think," the children all called in a breath—
"Tom Wood has run off to sea!
"He wouldn't we know, if he only had had
As happy a home as we."
The night came down, and the good-wife smiled
To herself, as she softly said:
"'Tis so sweet to labor for those we love,
It's no wonder that maids will wed!"

Thomas Burnett

TWO birds within one nest;
Two hearts within one breast;
Two spirits in one fair,
Firm league of love and prayer,
Together bound for aye, together blest.
An ear that waits to catch
A hand upon the latch,
A step that hastens its sweet rest to win;
A world of care without,
A world of strife shut out,
A world of love shut in.

Dora Greenwell

HE took in both hands her lovely head,
And looked in her eyes serene,
Many years married, but still as fond
As the foolish boy had been.

And "O my dear," said he, "and my love,
My dear sweet love and my wife,
If every kiss were a golden coin,
You would be rich for life.

"Nay, if of every kiss I have given
Each were but a single penny,
You would be rich with riches to spare—
Sweet wife, think how many, how many!"

"Yea, truly," she said, "yet I'd not barter one
While I bind up my sheaves of caresses;
But there's many, oh, many a poor rich wife
Who would give all of her gold for the kisses."

James V. Blake

I DREW her head
Down to my cheek, and said : "My angel wife!
Whatever torment or disquietude
I may have suffered, you have never been
Its cause or its occasion. You are all—
You have been all—that womanhood can be
To manhood's want ; and in your woman's love
And woman's pain, I have found every good
My life has known since first our lives were joined."

Josiah Gilbert Holland

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The Parting of the Ways

STILL on the lips of all we question
The finger of God's silence lies;
Will the lost hands in ours be folded?
Will the shut eyelids ever rise?

O friend, no proof beyond this yearning,
This outreach of our hearts we need;
God will not mock the hope He giveth;
No love He prompts shall vainly plead.

Then let us stretch our hands in darkness,
And call our loved ones o'er and o'er;
Some day their arms shall close about us,
And the old voices speak once more.

John Greenleaf Whittier

THOUGH cruel fate should bid us part,
Far as the pole and line,
Her dear idea round my heart
Should tenderly entwine.
Though mountains rise, and deserts howl,
And oceans roar between,
Yet, dearer than my deathless soul,
I still would love my Jean.

Robert Burns

AH well, shall I wonder you left me !
That world is "a rest:"
For so it is written: but this one
A battle at best,
Where the victors have scant time for wearing
The green laurel crown,
And the vanquished go down like the dry leaves,
When woodlands are brown.

You were young, you were gentle, you waited
With sorrowful eyes,
As vanished in fleeting succession
Rich prize after prize;
Till at last your small hands were left empty,
And, tired of the strife,
You turned to the Master: He led you
Away into life.

It is long since I saw you: I weary
And thirst ev'ry day;
Ev'ry day, ev'ry hour I ponder,
All wistful, the way
That leads to the kingdom you dwell in.
You trod it full fast;
But I caught—was it only a fancy?—
One sigh as you passed.

Shall I meet you some day with the angels–
Your beauty all new?
Will your soft eyes look on me so fondly?
As they used to do,
When you gathered my head to your bosom
With tender caress,
And my lips with a sweet touch of welcome
You bent down to press.

I hope for such meeting—I lost you,
So much left untold!
But perhaps even now you know all things—
The new and the old:
Perhaps even now you are nearer
Than ever before,
And you smile as you watch me come to you—
A lost love no more!

Alfred Norris

SHE dwelt among th' untrodden ways,
Beside the Springs of Dove ;
A maid whom there were few to praise,
And very few to love :

A violet by a mossy stone,
Half hidden from the eye !
Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be ;
But she is in her grave, and O
The difference to me !

William Wordsworth

YET love will dream and faith will trust
(Since He who knows our need is just),
That somehow, somewhere meet we must.
Alas for him who never sees
The stars shine through his cypress trees!
Who hopeless lays his dead away,
Nor looks to see the breaking day
Across the mournful marbles play!
Who hath not learned in hours of faith,
The truth to flesh and sense unknown,
That Life is ever lord of Death
And Love can never lose its own!

John Greenleaf Whittier

JUST a sprig of Scottish heather, in a letter where the tears,
Which have blotted words together, have been dried these many years.
Loving lines, yet sadly cheerful,—how "'twas lonesome here to-day,"
Then a pause, a little tearful, "Dear, you are so far away!"

Every sentence has its token of a love that could not fail
Throbbing with a faith unspoken, though the ink is growing pale;
Faded are the lines dim-lettered like sad ghosts upon the page;
Ah, that poor love should be fettered with the rusty iron of age!

Then that line, "I picked the heather from that spot, dear, you will know,
Where we walked and talked together,—oh, it seems so long ago!"
And at last, "Love how much better it will be when, by-and-by,
We'll not need to write a letter to each other, you and I!"

God! with what another meaning that one line has
long been true,
With Death's silence intervening since I last have
heard from you,
When you dropped Life's weary fetters, when you
went so far away,—
Thought you of unwritten letters I was missing
from that day?

If you know how I have needed some new token
through the years
You have slept away unheeded, it must move your
soul to tears.
If you still know how I love you, how I've missed
you day by day,
Since the heather grew above you, you could never
stay away.

Take all treasures, Time, I cherish, Fame and
Hope and Life at last,
Flitting things which needs must perish,—spare this
memory of the Past
Lying with a sprig of heather, in a letter where
the tears,
Which have blotted words together, have been
dried these many years.

HOW still she was. She only knew
His love. She saw no life beyond.
She loved with love that only lives
Outside itself and selfishness,—
A love that glows in its excess;
A love that melts pure gold, and gives
Thenceforth to all who come to woo
No coins but this face stamped thereon,—
Ay, this one image stamped upon
Its face, with some dim date long gone.

Joaquin Miller

BUT oh! 'twas hard to have him go,—to know
Day after day must pass without one sight
Of him who was so dear, *so dear!* to pine,
And sigh, and long for one hand-clasp; one sound
Of that soft, pleasant voice, to me so sweet;
One glance of those dear eyes I loved to meet.

Celia E. Gardiner

THERE, little girl, don't cry !
They have broken your doll, I know;
And your tea-set blue,
And your play-house, too,
Are things of the long ago;
But childish troubles will soon pass by—
There, little girl, don't cry !

There, little girl, don't cry !
They have broken your slate, I know;
And the glad, wild ways
Of your school-girl days
Are things of the long ago;
But life and love will soon come by—
There, little girl, don't cry !

There, little girl, don't cry !
They have broken your heart, I know;
And the rainbow gleams
Of your youthful dreams
Are things of the long ago;
But heaven holds all for which you sigh—
There, little girl, don't cry !

James Whitcomb Riley

From "Afterwhiles," By permission of Bowen-Merrill Company.

LOVE not ! love not ! Ye hapless sons of clay :
Hope's gayest wreaths are made of earthly flowers ;
Things that are made to fade and fall away,
Ere they have blossomed for a few short hours.

Love not ! love not ! the thing you love may change,
The rosy lips may cease to smile on you,
The kindly beaming eyes grow cold and strange,
The heart still warmly beat, yet not be true.

Love not ! love not ! the thing you love may die,
May perish from the gay and gladsome earth :
The silent stars, the blue and smiling sky,
Beam on its grave, as once upon its birth.

Love not ! love not ! O warning vainly said
In present hours, as in the years gone by :
Love flings a halo round the dear one's head—
Faultless ! Immortal ! till they change or die.

Caroline Norton

THOU ling'ring star, with less'ning ray,
That lov'st to greet the early morn,
Again thou usherest in the day
My Mary from my soul was torn.
O Mary, dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

That sacred hour can I forget?
Can I forget that hallowed grove,
Where by the winding Ayr we met,
To live one day of parting love!
Eternity can not efface
Those records dear of transports past;
Thine image at our last embrace—
Ah, little thought we 'twas our last!

Ayr, gurgling, kissed his pebbled shore,
O'erhung with wild woods, thick'ning green;
The fragrant birch, and hawthorn hoar,
Twined am'rous round the raptured scene;
The flowers sprang wanton to be prest,
The birds sang love on ev'ry spray—
Till soon, too soon, the glowing west
Proclaimed the speed of winged day.

Still o'er these scenes my memory wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care ;
Time but th' impression stronger makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.
My Mary ! dear departed shade !
Where is thy place of blissful rest ?
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid ?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast ?

Robert Burns

TWO shall be born the whole wide world apart,
And speak in different tongues and have no thought
Each of the other's being, and no heed ;
Yet these o'er unknown seas to unknown lands
Shall cross ; escaping wreck, defying death,
And all unconsciously shape every act
And bend each wandering step unto this end,
That one day out of darkness they shall meet,
And read life's meaning in each other's eyes.

And two shall walk some narrow way of life
So closely side by side that should one turn
Ever so little space to left or right,
They needs must stand acknowledged face to face;
Yet these with groping hands that never clasp,
With wistful eyes that never meet, and lips
Calling in vain on ears that never hear,
Shall wander all their weary days unknown,
And die unsatisfied. And this is Fate !

Susan Marr Spaulding

IF now you saw me you would say :
Where is the face I used to love ?
And I would answer : Gone before ;
It tarries veiled in Paradise.
When once the Morning Star shall rise,
When earth with shadow flees away,
And we stand safe within the door,
Then you shall lift the veil thereof.
Look up, rise up ; for far above
Our palms are grown, our place is set ;
There we shall meet as once we met,
And love with old familiar love.

Christina Georgina Rossetti

I CLASSED, appraising once,
Earth's lamentable sounds : the "well-a-day,"
The jarring "Yea" and "Nay,"
The fall of kisses on unanswering clay,
The sobbed "farewell," the "welcome" mourn-
But all did leaven the air [fuller—
With a less bitter leaven of sure despair,
Than these words—"I loved once."

And who saith, "I loved once?"
Not angels, whose clear eyes love, love foresee
Love through Eternity !
Who, by "to love," do apprehend "to be."
Not God, called Love, His noble crown-name—
A light too broad for blasting ! [casting
The Great God, changing not from everlasting,
Saith never, "I loved once !"

Oh, never is "Loved once"
Thy word, Thou Victim-Christ, misprized Friend!
Thy cross and curse may rend ;
But, having loved, Thou lovest to the end !
It is man's saying—man's ! Too weak to move
One sphered star above,
Man desecrates the eternal God-word, Love,
With his "no more," and "once."

* * *

Say never, ye loved once!
God is too near above, the grave beneath,
And all our moments breathe
Too quick in mysteries of life and death,
For such a word. The eternities avenge
Affections light of range—
There comes no change to justify that change,
Whatever comes—"loved once!"

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

O LOVE ! thou makest all things even
In earth or heaven ;
Finding thy way through prison bars
Up to the stars ;
Or, true to the Almighty plan,
That out of dust created man,
Thou lookest in a grave—to see
Thine immortality !

Sarah Flower Adam

TELL me, my wishing soul, dids't thou e'er try
How fast the wings of red-crossed Love can fly?
Why beg'st thou, then, the pinions of a dove?
Faith's wings are swifter; but the swiftest, Love!

Anon

THE cords of love must be strong as death
Which hold and keep a heart,
Not daisy-chains, that snap in the breeze,
Or break with their weight apart.

Phœbe Cary

And their Happiness has Heightened
Though their Hair is Growing Gray

THEY were young and glad together
In the dawn of life's first May,
When in bright and sunny weather
Sang the birds from every spray.
Clear the heaven shone out above them;
Blue and radiant were the skies;
All things living seemed to love them;
And the spring gleamed in her eyes.

Through life's summer still together,
Hand in hand and heart to heart,
They have borne the sultry weather
And have watched the days depart.
Still she is to him the maiden
Who stepped daintily of old
Through the grass, her apron laden
With bright buttercups of gold.

Still together, still together,
They will face life's autumn hours;
In the grim November weather
Love will strew their path with flowers.
For their love has ever brightened
Since the first long loving day,
And their happiness has heightened,
Though their hair is growing gray!

 George Barlow

THY voice is near me in my dreams;
In accents sweet and low,
Telling of happiness and love
In days long, long ago.

Word after word I think I hear,
Yet strange it seems to me
That, though I listen to thy voice,
Thy face I never see.

From night to night my weary heart
Lives on the treasured past,
And ev'ry day I fondly say,
He'll come to me at last.

Yet still I weep, and watch, and pray,
As time rolls slowly on;
And yet I have no hope but thee,
Thou first, thou dearest one.

M. Lindsay

DO you remember when you heard
My lips breathe love's first faltering word?
You do, sweet—don't you?
When, having wandered all the day,
Linked arm in arm I dared to say,
You'll love me—won't you?

And when you blushed, and could not speak,
I fondly kissed your glowing cheek;
Did that affront you?
Oh, surely not; your eye exprest
No wrath, but said, perhaps in jest,
You'll love me—won't you?

I'm sure my eyes replied, "I will;"
And you believe that promise still;
You do, sweet—don't you?
Yes, yes, when age has made our eyes
Unfit for questions or replies,
You'll love me—won't you?

Thomas Haynes Bayly

OH, lay thy hand in mine, dear!
We're growing old;
But time hath brought no sign, dear,
That hearts grow cold.
'Tis long, long since our new love
Made life divine,
But age enricheth true love
Like noble wine.

And lay thy cheek to mine, dear,
And take thy rest;
Mine arms around thee twine, dear,
And make thy nest.
A-many cares are pressing
On this dear head,
But sorrow's hands in blessing
Are surely laid.

Oh, lean thy life on mine, dear,
'Twill shelter thee!
Thou wert a winsome vine, dear,
On my young tree.
And so, till boughs are leafless
And birds are flown,
We'll twine, then lay us, griefless,
Together down.

THEY sin who tell us Love can die:
With life all other passions fly,
All others are but vanity.
In Heaven ambition cannot dwell,
Nor avarice in the vaults of Hell:
Earthly these passions; as of Earth,
They perish where they have their birth.
But Love is indestructible;
Its holy flame forever burneth;
From Heaven it came—to Heaven returneth.
Too oft on Earth a troubled guest,
At times deceived, at times opprest,
It here is tried and purified,
And hath in Heaven its perfect rest.
It soweth here with toil and care,
But the harvest-time of Love is *there*.

Robert Southey

THEY sin who tell us Love can die;
They err who tell us Love is blind:
Within each orb doth sleepless lie
A watcher from the soul behind.

When Love was left on this earth so cold,
So far from her native skies,
God gave her the lamp of love to hold,
And lighted her starlike eyes.

And she can see where the world sees not,
And she can go where none other may;
If I were through dark Hades brought,
I'd still ask Love to lead the way.

Tender and true is the light of her eyes,
As she looks me through and through;
In knowing, and loving silence, wise,
Yet fond as no fault she knew.

Like the keen-vision'd eagle, the tender-eyed dove,
So sees the guardian angel, Love.
She spreads her mantle o'er ev'ry sin,
But Love will have all pure within.

John Mason

God Keep you Safely, Dearest,
Till the Light

GOD keep you, dearest, all this long dark night;
The winds are still,
The moon drops down behind the western hill,
God keep you safely, dearest, till the light.

God keep you still when slumber fades away;
For care and strife
Take up new arms to fret our waking life:
God keep you thro' the battle of the day.

God keep you! This, dear love, is all the strain
Of every prayer.
I can but say again, and yet again,
God keep you every time and everywhere.

Mary Higman

AND said I that my limbs were old?
And said I that my blood was cold,
And that my kindly fire was fled
And my poor withered heart was dead;
And that I might not sing of Love?
How could I to the dearest theme
That ever warmed a minstrel's dream,
So foul, so false a recreant prove!
How could I name Love's very name,
Nor wake my harp to notes of flame!

In peace, Love tunes the shepherd's reed;
In war, he mounts the warrior's steed;
In halls, in gay attire is seen;
In hamlets, dances on the green.
Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below and saints above;
For Love is Heaven, and Heaven is Love.

Sir Walter Scott

LET me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove;
Oh, no! it is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown although his height be
taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

William Shakespeare

IF I had known in the morning,
How wearily all the day
The words unkind would trouble my mind
That I said when you went away,
I had been more careful, darling,
Nor given you needless pain ;
But—we vex our own with look and tone
We might never take back again.

For though in the quiet evening
You may give me the kiss of peace,
Yet it well might be that never for me
The pain of the heart should cease !
How many go forth in the morning
Who never come home at night,
And hearts have been broken for harsh words spoken
That sorrow can ne'er set right.

Margaret E. Sangster

IT isn't the thing you do, dear,
It's the thing you leave undone,
That gives you a bit of heartache
At the setting of the sun.
The tender word forgotten,
The letter you did not write,
The flower you did not send, dear,
Are your haunting ghosts at night.

The stone you might have lifted
Out of a brother's way;
The bit of heartsome counsel
You were hurried too much to say;
The loving touch of the hand, dear,
The gentle, winning tone,
Which you had no time nor thought for,
With troubles enough of your own.

For life is all too short, dear,
And sorrow is all too great,
To suffer our slow compassion,
That tarries until too late;
And it isn't the thing you do, dear,
It's the thing you leave undone,
Which gives you a bit of heartache
At the setting of the sun.

Margaret Elizabeth Sangster

GOOD-BY, Sweetheart.
I leave thee with all purest things,
That when some fair temptation sings
Its luring song, though sore beset,
Thou 'lt stronger be; then no regret
Life-long will follow after thee.
With touches lighter than the air
I kiss thy forehead brave and fair,
And say to God this last deep prayer.
"Oh, guard him always night and day,
So from Thy peace he shall not stray."
And so Good-by, Sweetheart.

Good-by, Sweetheart. We seem to part;
Yet still within my inmost heart
Thou goest with me. Still my place
I hold in thine by love's dear grace;
Yet all my life seems going out,
As slow I turn my face about
To go alone another way,—
To be alone till life's last day,
Unless thy smile can light my way.
Good-by, Sweetheart. The dreaded dawn,
That tells our love's long tryst is gone,
Is purpling all the pallid sky,
As loud I sigh, Sweetheart, good-by!

 Mary Clemmer

GOD keep you safe, my love,
All through the night;
Rest close in His encircled arms
Until the light.
My heart is with you as I kneel to pray,
Good night! God keep you in His care alway.

Thick shadows creep like silent ghosts
About my head;
I lose myself in tender dreams,
While overhead
The moon comes stealing through the window bars,
A silver sickle gleaming 'mid the stars.

For I, though I am far away,
Feel safe and strong
To trust you thus, dear love—and yet—
The night is long.
I say with sobbing breath, the fond, old prayer:
Good-night, sweet dreams, God keep you everywhere.

Mary Higman

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